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THE CHARACTER AND QUALIFICATIONS OF AN Honest Loyal MERCHANT.

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LONDON:
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THE

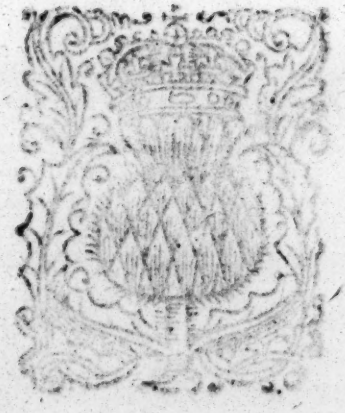
CHARACTER

AND

QUALIFICATIONS

OF A

MERCHANT.



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THE CHARACTER and QUALIFICATIONS OF AN HONEST LOYAL MERCHANT.

THE Loyal Honeſt MERCHANT is an Univerſal Tradeſman, and all the World is his *Shop*; A diligent Bee, ever buſie in bringing Honey to the *Publick Hive*; The Nations *Purveyor*, that improves its Superfluities, and ſupplies its Neceſſities; The ſame to the *Body Politick*, as the *Liver*, *Veins*, and *Arteries* are to the *Natural*; for he both raiſes and diſtributes *Treaſure*, the *vital Blood* of the Common-Weal. He is the *Steward* of the Kingdoms *Stock*, which by his good or ill management, does proportionably increaſe or languiſh. One of the moſt uſeful members in a State, without whom it can never be *Opulent* in Peace, nor conſequently *Formidable* in War.

FOR he fetches in the good things of the remoteſt Regions to Enrich his Countrey, and by the *honeſt Magick* of Induſtry, removes the *Mines of Peru*, and the Golden *Sands of Guinea* whither he pleaſes. He can make a *barren Heath*, or a contemptible *Bogg*, (that has not

one *Tree* but what you muſt plant, nor one *Stone* but what you muſt bring thither, a place that has nothing of its own product worth ſpeaking of) to be yet the richeſt City for its Bigneſs, and the greateſt Storehouſe and Empory for all ſorts of Commodities in the World.

'Tis by his means,

The Taſte of choice Arabian Spice *we know,*
Without thoſe ſcorching Heats *that make it grow.*
In Indian Gems, *and* Perſian Silks *we ſhine;*
And without Planting, *drink of every* Vine.

WITHOUT him the World would ſtill be a kind of *Wilderneſs*, one part unknown and unbeholding to the other; and if ever its remote Inhabitants *met*, it would be rather for miſchief and *ſlaughter*, than mutual aſſiſtance; Whereas *his pains* unites divided Empires, and thoſe that never beheld the *ſame Stars*; joins people ſeparated by different Climates, Religions, and Policies, into one common Society; And by the Mediation of *Commerce*, makes the *Sun-burnt Ethiopian* contribute to the relief of the *Frozen Muſcovite*.

HE is the true *Orpheus* that charms the *Savages*, and ſpreads Civility amongſt *Barbarians*; he communicates *Arts* and Sciences, and all uſeful *Inventions* both for Neceſſity and Ornament: Unleſs he had advanced *Navigation*, Geography might have ſtill lain muffled in *Strabo's Cloak*, and *Aſtronomy* been confin'd to *Ptolemy's* narrow *Horizon*; we might to this day have believed the Poets Fables of *Frigid* and *Torrid Zones* uninhabitable; That there was no living (forſooth) under the *Æquator*, or within the *Artick* and *Antartick* Circles; Each quick-

quick-sighted *Vergilius* might have been in danger of Deprivation, for holding the supposed Heresie of *Antipodes*; The *Art of Healing* it self had incurably languisht, our Apothecaries Shops been destitute of the best part of the *Materia Medica*, or choicest Rarities of the *Tripple Kingdom*; and an *English Herbal* might have bounded the studies of our most Learned *Colledg of Physicians*.

NAY further, there seems yet a more sublime and mysterious designment of *Providence* attending his pains; for by establishing an intercourse with *Infidels* for Civil Traffick, a door is not seldom open'd to advance the *Divine Interest*; so that he may propagate our most *Holy Faith*, as well as vend our Temporal Commodities; and by penetrating both *Indies*, and (like the Sun) compassing the World, administers opportunities to divulge the Light of the *Gospel*; whilst our stupid Gallants think, he Voyages only to bring them Pearls to hang at the Ears of their *Mistresses*, *Mango's* to relish their *Mutton*, or Pepper to strew over their *Cucumbers*.

IN these remote Negotiations, he counts it next to denying his *Saviour*, to occasion by any dishonest or *immoral* Act, his Blessed Name to be *Blasphem'd amongst the Gentiles*. He would rather endure the *Rack* himself, than stretch a Piece of Cloath on the Tenters to make it three or four Yards longer, which when sold to a *Turk*, shall in the next Shower, *Cockle* all up in a *Ruck*, causing the honest *Musulman* to revile both the cheating Christian and his Religion; Tho the later altogether undeservedly, since It most severely condemns Circumvention, and enjoyns not only strict *Fidelity* and *Justice* in our dealings, but *Charity* too, towards all Mankind, even our most professed Enemies.

THIS

THIS our *Merchant* is ſenſible of, and trembles at that WOE pronounced againſt thoſe by whom ſuch ſcandalous *Offences come*; Therefore keeps a *double Guard* on his Converſation abroad, as knowing that not only his own private Reputation, but the Honour of his *Religion* and *Nation*, in ſome meaſure depends thereon. His *Faith* is firmer than the *Needle* of his *Compaſs*, for it admits not of the leaſt *Variation*; his Devotion is one and the *ſame*, in all Countries, and his *Zeal* as great beyond, as on this ſide *the Line*; For like the *Sun*, tho he traverſe round the habitable Globe, yet ſtill he keeps conſtant to the *Ecliptick* of *Truth*, and will not Barter away *the Pearl of Price*, for any worldly gains, but uſes diligence in the firſt place to Enſure his *Soul*, dreading no *Shipwrack* ſo much as that *of a good Conſcience*.

AND as Piety and *Loyalty* are inſeperable; ſo next to *Sacriledg*, (which is a robbing of God) he abhors *Smuckling* and *Running of Goods*, or *Entring* one Commodity for another that pays more, &c. (Which is a robing of Gods Vicegerent, the *King*;) His practice being a daily Comment on that Text, *Render unto Cæſar the things that are Cæſars*, &c. He reckons all thoſe that uſe any ſuch unlawful Courſes, far from being either good *Chriſtians* or Loyal *Subjects*; Nay eſteems it not only a ſimple *Cheat* or bare *Felony*, by any Pretenſions, Concealments, Trick or Artifices to defraud his *Sovereign* of thoſe Dues the *Law* has ſetled, But a kind of unfledg'd *Treaſon* againſt the Crown, ſince 'tis apparently a deſign to weaken and ſubvert the *Royal* Power, when we purloin the *Revenues* neceſſary for the ſupport of the *Government*.

HE knows, That a Nation may be impoveriſht and ruin'd by a *great Trade* ill manag'd, as well as by *too little*; and that the Kingdom may *get*, even when the Mer-

Merchant *loſes*, and the Merchant often get when the Kingdom *loſes*; But for his own part is ſo paſſionate a Lover of his Country, as to poſtpone his private Advantages to the utility of the *Publick*; And therefore thinks himſelf obliged (whenever fit opportunity is offered) humbly to inform *his Sovereign*, or ſome of the Chief Miniſters of State, (or Parliament, when conven'd), of the *Over-ballance of Importations* from any Country; and of all Exportations or Importations of any ſort of Goods that are notably *prejudicial* or *profitable* to the Kingdom, to the end there may be *wholſom Laws* made to prevent the One, and encourage the Other;

FOR not only the increaſe or decay of *Sea-men* and *ſhipping*, (the Walls of our *Britiſh* Empire) The encouragement or diſcouragement of *Manufacturers*, and conſequently the *Encreaſe of People*, (which if duly employed can never be too many, their multitudes being always the firſt *Riches* as well as *Strength* of any Nation) but alſo the Value of every Country-Gentlemans *Lands*, Rents, Corn, Cattel, &c. does all ultimately depend upon, and are Influenced by It, and muſt either *Riſe* or *Fall* in equal proportion as Forreign Traffick is well or ill manag'd, clog'd, or Encouraged.

JUSTICE, ſquare Dealing, and a *punctual Honeſty*, are Eſſential Qualities in our true-bred *Merchant*. Hence his *Books* are allow'd *Evidence*, and lookt upon as a kind of *Records*; and a ſmall *Script* of two or three Lines only under his hand, without either *Witneſs* or *Seal*, paſſes over the world for Thouſands of Pounds, as Authentick as Twenty *Noverint univerſi's*, or other long-winded Inſtruments, Sealed and Delivered in the Preſence of *John Doe*, and *Richard Roe*, and half the Pariſh beſides.

I AM not Ignorant that the Title of *Merchant* in some parts of the World, is usurp'd by almost all sorts of little People whose Business is to *Buy and Sell*; But properly (and wholly here in *England*) it belongs to none but such as drive *a forreign Trade*, whereby they are vastly differenc'd from ordinary *Shopkeepers and Retailers*; Our *Merchant* is a person of *Bulk*, and considerable Figure in the Common-Weal, and must be Endow'd with *Qualifications* proportionate.

1. HE should have a competent *Fund*, or Estate left him by his Ancestors; for tho *Credit* (charily kept) be a main support of, and Emprovement to his Affairs, yet *It* (alone) can never be a good beginning for such an Employment; for if he have not a fair *Visible Stock* to build on, every small *puff* of misfortune will be apt to shock his Reputation.

2. THERE ought also to be strong *Natural Parts*, an Active Vigorous *Body*, to endure the Fatigues of Travel; and a ready comprehensive Mind. A good dose of *Mercury* should go to his Constitution, To render him (*etsi non versuti, versatilis tamen Ingenij*) tho not of a crafty over-reaching, yet of a brisk *accommodating Genius*, whereby he may apply himself with an easy obliging Address to all sorts of *Humours* or Accidents; yet this *Mercury* should be fixt by *Saturn*, or the Gaiety of his Complexion ting'd with a dash of *Melancholy*, to keep him from the vanity and extravagancies of a *Town-Wit*, and the beggarly fate of the *everlasting Tatlers*; For *Secrecy* is a vertue almost as necessary to a *Merchant* as to a Statesman.

3. AS his Birth was Generous, so his *Education* was *Liberal*. He has *Latin* enough to understand an *Author*, or Discourse a *Stranger*; and to serve as a Prepa-

rative

rative and Ground-Work for the reſt of his neceſſary Accompliſhments; But thinks it ſcarce worth the while to ſlave ſeven years under the Tyranny of the *Ferula*, meerly to obtain the skill of Hunting a *Greek Derivative*, and Capping of Verſes.

4. HE has the command of his *Pen*, and writes a fair Genteel Hand, not crampt up to a *ſet Secretary* like a Scriveners Boy; nor ſcrawling *Long-Tails*, like a Wench at a Boarding-School, but a neat charming *mixture of Roman and Italian* flowing with a kind of Artificial Negligence. [Of which in my Opinion Mr. *Ayres* by St. *Pauls-School*, is at leaſt *one of the beſt Teachers* about *London.*]

5. HE is well-skill'd in that Foundation of Arts, the Science of *Numbers*: for as *Merchandize* (next after Religion and Juſtice) is the life of the Weal-Publick, ſo *Practical Arithmetick* is the Soul of Merchandize. But eſpecially he is throughly verſed in that noble method of *Debtor and Creditor*, uſed only by thoſe of his own Profeſſion. And his Books are kept with ſo much *Order* as well as *Punctualneſs* and Integrity, that 'tis the eaſieſt thing in the world to *find out* any thing inquired after; and as ſoon as found, it carries with it *Demonſtration.*

6. I NEED not tell you, that he is expert in the Nature and Forms of *Charter-Parties*, *Bills of Lading*, *Invoyces*, *Contracts*, *Bills of Exchange*, *Policies of Enſurance*, and the powers, obligations and effects of each of them. He knows the *Meaſures*, *Weights*, and *Money* of all forreign Countries, I mean the *Coyns* not only by their ſeveral Denominations, but alſo in their *Intrinſick* Values in weight and fineneſs compared with the *Standard* of his own Country.

7. HE understands the *Customs*, *Tolls*, *Taxes*, *Impositions* and other Charges upon all sorts of *Merchandize* Exported or Imported to and from forreign Countries, or at home. In what Commodities each Region or Province abounds; what convenient *Ports* they have, what *Wares* they want or are fond of; and how, from whence, and at what Rates, furnisht. As also what Goods are *Contraband* in times of War, and what others in peace are *Prohibited* (for Reasons of State) in each place, to be Exported or Imported, and how the Rates of *Exchange* by Bills go from time to time.

8. PARTICULARLY, as *Owner*, or Part-owner *of Ships*, he has an Insight into the Goodness and Prices of all *Materials* requisite for *Building* or Repairing them, and in the diverse Workmanships thereof; as likewise for *Masts*, *Tackling*, *Cordage*, *Ordnance*, *Victuals*, *Ammunition*, &c. Together with the Ordinary *Wages* of Commanders, Officers, and Mariners; To know upon what *Rates* and Conditions to *Fraight* his Ships, and Ensure his *Adventures* from one Port to another; and to be well acquainted with the Laws, Orders, and Customs of the *Ensurance-Offices* and *Courts of Admiralty* both here and beyond the Seas.

9. BY his frequent Voyaging and seeing the Wonders of the Lord in the great Deeps, he becomes skilful in *Navigation*, and not unacquainted with *Astronomy*; And by his Residence in several forreign parts, he attains to the speaking of divers the most useful *Languages*, and is (by the way) a diligent Observer of the Ordinary *Revenues* and *Expences* of those Princes and States; Their strength both by Sea and Land; Their *Laws*, *Customs*, *Policies*, *Manners*, *Religion*, *Architecture*, *Military*

Military Diſcipline, Arts, Manufactories, and other Obſervables, of which he is capable to give an Account on all occaſions for the good of his Country.

SO that I ſcarce know any other Profeſſion which leadeth into ſo much Knowledge, either of the *Great World*, (as to its Scituation, Products and Mutual Dependence) or of the little World [MAN] (as to his Humours, Bigotries, Paſſions, Intrigues, and Blindſides) In the underſtanding of which *two things* ſeems to conſiſt (if I miſtake not) the main part of what we call *civil Knowledg*, Wiſdom, or Policy.

NOW if our *Merchants* Occupation be thus neceſſary, and require ſuch *Variety* of excellent Qualifications, How can it but be *Honourable* too? For what can better Recommend any Calling to Wiſemens Regards, than its *Uſefulneſs*? Or be more *Genteel* and Glorious, than to ſupply the common *Neceſſities* of Mankind? Who is more to be eſteemed than *the Man* whoſe Induſtry underprops his *Soveraigns Throne* with Wealth, and at the ſame time furniſhes his *Fellow-Subjects* with Employment, and the means of a comfortable Subſiſtence?

VAIN therefore, unjuſt, and ungrateful too, are their Clamours who would degrade this *Noble* Profeſſion as below a *Perſon of Quality* to Practice; Becauſe (Forſooth) 'tis *Queſtuary*, and reſpects *Gain*, (and I wonder what *Profeſſion* does not in ſome degree or other?) As if a *Gentleman* might Honourably *Buy* an *Office*, and *Sell* his *Land* or his *Breath*, but nothing elſe: As if a *Lawyer*, or a *Phyſitian* might *Pocket his Fees* (the juſt *Engagements*, or Remunerations of his well-intended Endeavours) without *Sullying* either his *Family*, or his *Gown*; and yet a *Merchant* ſhould utterly forfeit his *Birthright*,

by Receiving *a Bill* of *Exchange?* I intend no odious Compariſons, or in the leaſt to Affront thoſe *other* moſt Worthy and Learned Profeſſions, but only to vindicate the Honour of *Merchandize*, and convince the World, That if a perſon of Quality ſhould happen to breed up his *Son*, or Match a *Daughter* therein, there's no danger that they ſhould preſently be level'd with the common Crowd, or Numbred with the *Gaffers* and the *Gammers.*

FOR ſince a *Perſon of Honour* may without any diſparagement, improve his *Lands*, and let his *Houſes*, and ſell his *Cattel* for as much as he can get; And *Buy* his Proviſions, *Furniture*, and *Equipage* as cheap as he can; I am ſo dull as not to conceive whence any *Stains* ſhould reflect on his Scutcheon, If he ſhould happen to Equip a *Ship*, and ſend abroad Ten Thouſand Pounds worth of *Cloth* or *Tin*, and in return bring back a gallant *Cargo* of twice the value, to Enrich his Country as well as himſelf.

'TIS a ſmart, but I hope, cauſeleſs Reflection of a late Ingenious (*) Author. "We are "(ſays he) ſtill pretending to be more "Acurate in *Logick* and *Philoſophy* "(which howſoever otherwiſe uſeful, "do not add Twopence *per Annum* to "the *Riches* of the Nation) we conti-"nue to ſqueeze all the *Sapleſs* Papers and Fragments of "Antiquity; we grow mighty well acquainted with "the *old Heathen gods*, Towns, and People; we priſe "our ſelves in fruitleſs curioſities; we turn our *Lice* "and *Fleas* into *Bulls* and *Pigs* by our *Magnifying Glaſ-*"*ſes*; we are ſearching for the World in the *Moon* with "our *Teleſcopes*; we ſend to weigh the Air on the "top

(*) *Britannia Languens*, or a diſcourſe of Trade, Printed, 1680.

"top of *Teneriff*; we invent *Paceing Saddles*, and "*Gimcracks* of all ſorts, which are voted Ingenuities, "whilſt the ſolid and moſt uſeful Notions and Conſide-"rations of *Trade*, are turn'd into a *Ridicule*, or out of "Faſhion.

SURE I am, whatever low Conceits *Ariſtotle* or ſome other Pedants may have had of Merchandize in old times, when its Dignity was not known, and when indeed it was but *Huckſtering* and *Pedlary* in reſpect of what it has ſince arriv'd to; it muſt be avow'd, That 'tis long ſince become not unworthy of Perſons of the firſt Quality; not only the *Magnifico*'s of *Luca*, and *Genoua*, The *Illuſtriſſimo*'s of *Venice*, and the *High Mighty* Burghers of *Holland*, and ſuch like Republican Grandees, make it their buſineſs; But abſolute *Sovereign Princes* have courted it. *Ferdinando* the firſt great Duke of *Tuſcany*, and his Succeſſors, by their care and diligence to countenance Merchants in their Affairs, have ſo encreaſed the practice thereof, That there is ſcarce a *Nobleman* or *Gentleman* in all their Dominions that doth not Traffick either by himſelf or in Copartnerſhip, whereby within fifty or ſixty Years, the Trade to their Port of *Legorn* is ſo much augmented, that of a poor *little Town* (as ſome yet living can remember it) 'tis now become a fair and *ſtrong City*, and one of the moſt famous places for Trade in *Europe*.

TO go higher, ſome of the moſt ſacred *Crowned Heads* of *Chriſtendom*, deſcended from, and ally'd to the moſt Ancient and Illuſtrious Families that the World can boaſt of; (and in that number principally our preſent moſt *Auguſt and Gracious Sovereign*), are ſo far from connting it any diminution to their *Royal Majeſties*,

Majesties, That in the highest manner they endeavour to encourage *Trade*, by interesting Themselves therein. Hence our *Exchange* is allow'd to wear that lofty Title of ROYAL; nor can the *Statues* of our *deceased Princes* any where be more Gloriously plac'd, (next to their Repositories in *Sacred* Ground) than in that *Magnificent Rendezvous of Merchants*; To intimate, that the Advancement and promoting of *Trade*, will be the Honour of our *Kings* Living and Dead.

THE Truth is, The *wisest of Kings* and Men has long since given his Judgment by his practice in this case; For *Solomon* himself could never have made *Silver and Gold to be as plenteous in Jerusalem as Stones, and Cedars as Sycamores*, if he had not first turned *Merchant*, join'd in *Copartnership* with King *Hiram*, and set out a Navy at *Ezion Geber* (a Port in the *Red Sea*) which had the Advantage of Traffick to the *Indian* Ocean, and from thence to *Ophir* (supposed to be the Isle of *Madagascar*) whence they brought *Gold* and *Silver* and *Elephants Teeth*, as well as *Apes* and *Peacocks*.

THEREFORE let none of our *Nobility* or *Gentry* think it a disgrace to Employ themselves or their *Sons* in this NOBLE MYSTERY, which as 'tis most advantagious to their Countrey and themselves, so the most excellent Personages have not disdain'd to embark in it: For (as the judicious Mr. *Mun* (∴) most truly says) "*Foreign Trade*, or the noble Profession of "the *Merchant*, is the great *Revenue* of the *King*, the "*Ho-*

(∴) *Englands Treasure*, p. 155.

" *Honour* of the Kingdom; The *School* of our Arts; The " *ſupply* of our Wants; The employment of our *Poor*; " The improvement of our *Lands*; The Nurſery of our " *Mariners*; the Walls of the Kingdom; The means " of our *Treaſure*; The ſinews of our *Wars*, and the " *Terror* of our Enemies.

FOR if *Forreign Commerce* be of ſuch Import to all Nations, That the *Wiſeſt* Princes and States every where Endeavour (tho labouring under never ſo great diſadvantage) to Careſs as much as they can, and obtain the *good Graces* of a Lady, that is always attended with ſo vaſt a *Dowry* (for to ſpeak freely, *that People* that can get the *Trade of the World*, may quickly, without purſuing the toils of the *Cæſars* and the *Alexanders*, be, (in effect) *Lords* of their Neighbours, and give *Laws* to the World) much more then ought *We* the happy Inhabitants of *Great Brittain*, highly to eſteem of *Traffick*, which God and Nature ſeem to have deſign'd for *our peculiar Portion*; *England* affording the *moſt*; and *beſt* natural Products and Materials for *Mauufactories*; the moſt and beſt *Ports*; moſt commodiouſly Scituate for Trade, either to the *Streights*, the *Baltick*, or either of the *Indies*; having alſo a *numerous People*, ſecured in their *Liberties and Properties* by a *Gracious Prince* and moſt wholſome *Laws*; *Seamen* as Brisk, Active, Skilful, and *Adventrous* as ever Plough'd the Ocean; bleſt beſides, with the greateſt *plenty* of all ſorts of *Proviſions*, and a vaſt *Fund* of *Land*, by *Taxes* on which in time of *War*, the Government may be Supported and Defended, and (in a word) enjoying all other Advantages that can poſſibly be imagined Requiſite; ſo that it muſt certainly be our *own Default*,

Default, if we are not poſſeſs'd of a greater and more Advantagious *Trade* than any of our Neighbours; and conſequently be not the *Richeſt* and moſt *Conſiderable* People in the World.

FINIS.